(c) The Department of Biotechnology has proposed various incentives from time to time to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce and Industry for various fiscal incentives to promote biotech sector. Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and other administrative Ministries/ Departments have implemented depreciation allowance on plant and machinery; customs duty exemption on goods imported for use in R&D projects; customs duty relief under Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) programme; 150% weighed income tax deduction on R&D expenditure; 125% rebate if research is contracted in public funded R&D institutions etc. There is a proposal to extend 10-year income tax holiday scheme for R&D companies.

Earnings on a Patent

1206. SHRI S. M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have developed an institutional framework which would enable a Scientist to retain a percentage of the earnings on a Patent;

(b) the details of this new system to help Scientists;

(c) in what manner Government would improve the Patent Registration system in the country;

(d) the steps Government propose to encourage scientists to do productive research; and

(e) the details of the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Institutions engaged in R&D projects funded by Ministry of Science and Technology are permitted to own patents generated and also retain the benefits and earnings arising out of the patents. The concerned inventors and other persons can get up to one-third of the actual earnings.

(b) The Government has set up specialized cells/centres in its different departments and agencies which provide technical, financial and legal help to scientists for protecting their inventive work in India and other countries. Intellectual property rights, so generated, are also maintained by these cells/centres.

(c) The Government has enacted new legislation in respect of patents and also modernized the patent offices in the country for receiving and

examining patent applications and awarding patents and post-grant activities.

(d) and (e) There are many ways in which the Government would encourage scientists to do productive research starting from funding of R&D projects to creation of awareness about intellectual property rights to facilitating protection of inventions and original work emanating from such projects to facilitating commercialization of technologies and know-how so generated through its various schemes and sharing of benefits and earnings by scientists. In addition, many awards have been instituted for recognized meritorious scientists.

Cloud seeding

1207. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US-based Weather Modification Inc. had done the cloud seeding in the past two years in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is effective and whether there is any Government project to develop cloud seeding in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir. As informed by the Government of Maharashtra, Cloud seeding operations were conducted during the years 2003 and 2004 through U.S. based Weather Modification Inc.

(b) In the year 2003, cloud seeding operations were conducted for a period of 120 days starting from 20th September, 2003. The expenditure incurred was Rs. 8 crores. During 2004, the duration of seeding operation was 120 days starting from 20th June 2004. The expenditure incurred was 16 crores, as it was more extensive.

(c) Since the cloud seeding operations were not carried out in a manner which would enable comparison between rainfall in cloud seeded and non-seeded areas, it is not possible to comment on the effectiveness or otherwise of this operation. This Department has no project to develop cloud seeding at present.